

Proclamation 4931 of April 16, 1982

# Law Day U.S.A., 1982

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

The United States serves the world as a model of representative democracy, individual freedom and equal justice for all. These three goals of our Nation, guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and guarded by the dedication of our people, ensure that the United States will continue to be a beacon of liberty to oppressed peoples around the globe.

Law Day U.S.A. stands in sharp contrast to "May Day" observances conducted in the Communist world. We have only to look at recent events in Poland to be reminded of the difference between the rule of force and the rule of law. While freedom has been repressed in many lands since Law Day was first observed 25 years ago, it has steadily grown in our own, with increasing respect for the rights of all members of our society. It is thus fitting that the theme of Law Day, 1982, is "A Generation of Progress."

This 25th celebration of Law Day U.S.A. is also significant in view of this particular moment in our history. Two hundred years ago our forefathers, having fought and won the Battle of Yorktown, began the final process of establishing our federal system—the cornerstone of our Republic. This process, beginning with the end of the Revolutionary War, progressed through the Articles of Confederation and culminated with the adoption of the Constitution by the Convention of States on September 17, 1787. Thus, Law Day U.S.A., 1982, celebrates not only 25 years of progress, but also 200 years of progress.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, proclaim Saturday, May 1, 1982, as Law Day U.S.A. and invite the American people to mark the observance with programs that stress the importance of the Constitution to our individual freedoms and our form of government.

I urge the clergy of all faiths to bring the moral and ethical dimensions of the law to public attention through sermons and suitable programs.

I call upon students and teachers at all levels to study and teach the events and documents that led to the adoption of the Constitution in 1787 and its ratification on June 21, 1788, so that the 200th Anniversary of our Constitution might be marked by learned discourse on the history and purpose of this great Charter of Freedom.

I also call upon public officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings open on May 1, 1982.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixth.

RONALD REAGAN

Editorial Note: The President's remarks of Apr. 16, 1982, on signing Proclamation 4931 are printed in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (vol. 18, p. 487).